

CHARLIE BAKER
Governor



KARYN POLITO
Lt. Governor

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CONTACT

William Pitman, Governor's Office

william.pitman@state.ma.us

Lisa Battiston, Department of Transportation

lisa.battiston@dot.state.ma

**Baker-Polito Administration Authorizes MBTA Control Board Extension,
Board and Staffing Transitions Announced To Continue Reform Momentum**

Effective July 1st, Acting GM Shortsleeve to step down and join FMCB, as Vice-Chair Poftak temporarily steps down to serve as Interim GM

BOSTON – Acting to maintain momentum toward improving the MBTA for riders, Governor Charlie Baker, Lt. Governor Karyn Polito and Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack today announced that the MBTA's Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB) will extend its governance by two years as allowed under authorizing statute.

Personnel and board changes, were also announced as the MBTA continues its search for a permanent CEO and General Manager.

Effective July 1st:

- **MBTA Acting GM and Chief Administrator Brian Shortsleeve** will vacate both positions and join the FMCB.
- **FMCB Vice-Chair Steve Poftak** will *temporarily* vacate his board position to serve as Interim GM.
- **MBTA Chief Operating Officer (COO) Jeffrey Gonneville** will be *promoted* to Deputy GM.
- **MBTA Chief Financial Officer Michael Abramo** will be *promoted* to Chief Administrative Officer.

Effective at a future date upon the hiring of a permanent GM:

- **FMCB Member Lisa Calise** will vacate her seat to focus on new job at UMASS, when **Vice-Chair Steve Poftak** will rejoin the board.

“In the last two years, the FMCB has made measured and substantial progress on reform and investments in our public transit system to deliver a more reliable service for riders,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “We are grateful to Brian Shortsleeve, Lisa Calise, Steve Poftak and the other Board Directors, Joe Aiello, Monica Tibbits-Nut and Brian Lang, MBTA management and staff for their service, and look forward to having their continued direction. As the MBTA nears the hiring of a permanent CEO and GM who can cement its turnaround, we are confident the T will have the knowledge, skills and resources to continue making successful improvements to service and performance.”

Comprehensive and bipartisan transportation reform legislation first proposed and later signed by Governor Baker in the wake of the T’s collapse in the winter of 2015, authorized the FMCB for an initial three-year term that would have expired in June 2018. In February, Governor Baker [recommended](#) the board request the two-year extension of its term as allowed by statute and is today approving their request to extend its governance through June 30, 2020.

“We are proud of the work that has been done under the leadership of Brian and the hardworking members of the FMCB and look forward to the progress they will continue to make before handing the reins to a new GM,” **said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito**. “The achieved cost savings and investments being made in core infrastructure are resulting in a system riders can more readily count on to safely get to work, school or wherever they may need to go.”

Secretary Pollack enlisted the assistance of a GM Search Advisory Panel and an executive search firm for a permanent MBTA CEO and GM, which she will name pending final candidate interviews and a selection which are in their final stages. Today, the Secretary also announced the promotions of MBTA Chief Operating Officer Jeffrey Gonneville and MBTA Chief Financial Officer Michael Abramo.

“We are pleased to have the interest of several experienced professionals and hope to make a decision soon on the next leader and chief executive who can lead the next stage of the MBTA’s transformation into a world class public transit system,” **said Secretary Pollack**. “We thank Brian for his service and look forward to continuing to work with him as a board member, and Steve for putting his experience to work in this interim capacity before he returns to the board. The MBTA, Steve and new GM will be well-served by the expertise of Jeff Gonneville and Mike Abramo in their elevated roles.

Under the leadership of the FMCB and Shortsleeve over the last two years, the MBTA has made progress to get its fiscal affairs in order, reducing a projected Fiscal Year 2018 operating budget deficit of \$335 million to \$30 million and improving T management in ways that are already enhancing the rider experience. Operating expense growth has been curbed to the lowest amount in 15 years, and Shortsleeve collaboratively worked with the MBTA’s largest union, the Boston Carmen’s Union Local 589, to reopen negotiations on its collective bargaining

agreement to save \$80 million over the next four years and over \$750 million over the next 25 years. The MBTA is spending \$675 million in savings and capital investments this year on system-wide upgrades and improvements to the state of good repair, a 59% increase over FY' 2016 capital spending.

A focus on core infrastructure investments and \$100 million in winter resiliency improvements have seen the installation of 23.5 new miles of third rail, 21.5 miles of new heating infrastructure and 3,600 linear feet of snow fencing along the Red and Orange Lines. Capital investments in fleet vehicles will see the delivery of 375 new busses by this fall, and 252 new Red Line cars and 152 new Orange Line cars in the future.

“With strong support from Governor Baker, Secretary Pollack and the FMCB, we have made significant progress in reducing the operating deficit and accelerating the capital spending that is necessary to improve service across the transit system,” **said Shortsleeve**. “I look forward to assuming my new role as an FMCB director, and helping to keep the MBTA on a path to long term financial stability.”

FMCB Vice-Chair Steve Poftak will vacate his position on the board temporarily and be replaced by Brian Shortsleeve. Poftak will rejoin the board upon the hiring of a permanent CEO and GM and when Poftak rejoins, FMCB Member Lisa Calise will vacate her position to focus on her new role as Senior Vice President for Administration & Finance and Treasurer at the University of Massachusetts.

To serve as Interim GM, Poftak will take a leave of absence from his current post as executive director of The Rappaport Institute for Greater Boston at the Harvard Kennedy School. Prior to assuming the leadership role at the Rappaport Institute, Poftak was Director of Research and Director of the Center for Better Government at the Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research. Previous roles include serving at the Commonwealth's Executive Office for Administration and Finance, where, among other roles, he managed the \$1.3 billion capital budget.

“Brian Shortsleeve is a very tough act to follow, even for a short period of time,” **said FMCB Vice-Chair Poftak**. “But with the support of T employees, including Mike and Jeff, I look forward to maintaining the momentum we have all worked so hard to achieve. Once a new CEO and GM is in place, I look forward to returning to the FMCB with an even greater understanding of what the T needs to succeed.”

Gonneville, a 17-year MBTA veteran, has served as the T's Chief Operating Officer for the past two years, working in the public and private transportation realm for more than 20 years and previously as the T's Chief Mechanical Officer responsible for the maintenance, oversight, long-term strategic planning and all other related tasks for maintaining a state of good repair for the Authority's light rail, heavy rail, bus, and non-revenue fleet.

Prior to becoming the Chief Financial Officer for the MBTA in 2015, Abramo served as CFO for a number of companies. His previous roles include Director of Finance and Business Development at Ascend Learning, Director in the Transaction Advisory practice at Alvarez & Marsal and Director in the Transaction Advisory practice at PricewaterhouseCoopers. He is a licensed Certified Public Accountant in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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